GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4883
ANSWERED ON:26.04.2000
ROLE OF LOBBYISTS
RAM JEEVAN SINGH

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the annual expenditure incurred by the Government on the lobbyists hired in the USA;

(b) whether the Government have made any analysis of the usefulness or otherwise of their services; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) Government of India spent US $ 9,00,000 during the year 1999-2000, on its two lobbying firms in the USA. The first lobbying firm M/s Verner Liipfert was hired on payment of US$ 50,000/- per month whereas the secondfirm M/s APCO Associates was paid US$ 25,000/- per month.

(b) The usefulness or otherwise of our lobbying firms is kept under constant review in order to get the best out of them. Mechanisms instituted to effectively monitor their work include weekly meetings convened by the Deputy Chief of Mission and other senior officers in Indian Embassy, Washington. Fortnightly reports on their activities are also sent to the Ministry.These constitute the basis of our ongoing assessment of the performance of the lobbying firms.

(c) The assessment has shown that a progressively supportive attitude towards India was manifest in the US Congress during the year, to which the lobbying firms have contributed positively. Recent examples include the Kargil Resolution in the House International Relations Committee (HIRC) criticising Pakistan and demanding respect of the LoC; letter to President Clinton by HIRC leaders demanding invocation of Section 508 in the wake of the military coup in Pakistan; statements by several Congressmen condemning the military coup and demanding restoration of democracy; HIRC letter to President Clinton opposing appointment of a Special Envoy on Kashmir; HIRC letter to President Clinton cautioning against waiver of Pressler Amendment or any kind of arms and spares supply to Pakistan; the India Resolution in October 1999 urging President Clinton to visit India and broaden the relationship into a strategic partnership, and HIRC letter to the President demanding US support for World Bank loans to India.